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ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURES
OF THE
TOWN OF MONT VERNON,
TOGETHER WITH THE
SCHOOL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 1 '81.

MANCHESTER, N. H.
UNION PUBLISHING COMPANY.
1881.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
STATE LIBRARY

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SELECTMEN'S REPORT.

The Selectmen respectfully present to the town of Mont Vernon their annual report of the receipts and expenditures for the year ending March 1st, 1881.

RECEIPTS.

Balance in treasury, March 1st, 1880,	\$1008 39	
Amount of taxes assessed	3098 41	
License on bowling alley	10 00	
		\$4116 80

RECEIVED FROM STATE.

Savings Bank tax	\$525 30	
Railroad tax	50 48	
Literary fund	41 81	
		617 59

Whole amount of receipts		\$4734 39
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EXPENDITURES.

Paid state tax	\$744 00	
Paid county tax	709 47	
		\$1453 47

DAMAGE TO SHEEP.

Paid J. R. Wilkins, 14 sheep	\$35 00	
Thomas Kennedy, 3 sheep	7 50	42 50
		\$1495 97

SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

Paid Center district	\$311 56	
South district	165 00	
North district	91 13	
East district	100 52	
West district	79 18	
Amherst district	15 18	
		\$762 57
Due South district		\$18 70
Paid McCollum Institute		\$300 00

BREAKING ROADS AND EXTRA REPAIRS TO
FEBRUARY 20, 1881.

	EXTRA REPAIRS.	BREAKING ROADS.
Paid District No. 1		\$ 3 00
District No. 2	\$2 20	14 99
District No. 3		6 99
District No. 4		18 45
District No. 5		38 75
District No. 6		26 63
District No. 7		13 90
District No. 8		40 07
District No. 9	8 80	27 23
District No. 10		22 87
District No. 11	4 70	12 00
District No. 12	1 50	20 40
District No. 13		45 54
District No. 14		8 25

District No. 15		\$9 00	
District No. 16		53 28	
District No. 17	4 69	26 64	
	\$21 89	\$387 99	\$409 88
			\$1472 45

SUPPORT OF POOR.

Paid for support of W. H. Brown at County Farm from Jan. 1st, 1880 to Jan 1st, 1881,	\$104 55	
John Smith for support of Charles and Angeline Smith, to March 25th, 1881,	116 00	
For flour for Mrs. J. H. Bennett,	14 75	
For clothes for Marden Bennett,	1 12	
For support of Roxanna Fry,	77 75	
A. Travis for money and services in consequence of poor,	5 00	
For two trips to County Farm, for two trips to Manchester, for one trip to Lyndeborough and Wil- ton,	10 00	
		\$329 17

TOWN OFFICERS' SERVICES.

Paid C. H. Raymond, selectman,	\$48 50
Alonzo Travis, selectman,	40 00
G. G. Batchelder, selectman,	35 50
G. W. Averill, town clerk,	20 00
G. W. Averill, collector,	50 00
Clark Campbell, treasurer,	18 00
Charles Livingston, constable,	2 00
W. H. Ray, superintending school committee,	31 00
J. W. Carson, supervisor,	3 00

Wm. G. Bruce, supervisor,	4 50	
G. W. Averill, supervisor,	3 00	
A. Travis, supervisor,	1 50	
A. Travis, moderator,	1 50	
		258 50
		\$587 67

MISCELLANEOUS.

Paid for digging graves and care of hearse and yard,	\$36 00	
For stools used at burials,	4 50	
For school notices and report cards and books,	3 85	
For tolling bell,	2 00	
Bounty on hawks,	5 20	
For guide boards and painting the same	6 90	
For wood,	2 00	
Wm. Conant, watering-trough,	3 00	
For plank and labor in District No. 11 in 1879,	5 03	
For collector's book and stationery and postage,	2 00	
For printing reports for 1880,	15 00	
Drs. Bunton and Sturtavent, re- cords of births and deaths,	3 50	
Interest on McCollom Institute note,	15 00	
Tolling bell in 1879,	3 00	
Town library,	50 00	
Non-resident highway receipts for 1880 and 1881,	80 25	
G. G. Batchelder, fencing up road,	1 25	
		\$238 48

ABATEMENT OF TAXES.

G. H. Eldridge for 1878,	\$1 05
Henry M. Fairfield for 1878,	4 61

Charles Brooks for 1880,	1 02	
Mrs. James Wright, for 1879,	1 00	
John Fallansbee, over tax for 1877 and 1878	2 06	
		\$9 74

NEW ROAD.

Paid land damage,	\$75 00	
For building 40 rods road,	53 00	
		\$128 00

NOTES AGAINST THE TOWN.

A. S. Bruce,	\$366 36	
A. W. Raymond,	339 01	
W. G. Bruce,	325 50	
Mc Collom Institute,	322 56	
L. E. Nutt,	525 00	
A. W. Raymond,	111 43	
W. G. Bruce,	215 25	
		\$2205 11
Whole amount of receipts	\$4734 39	
Whole amount of bills paid,	3932 31	
Balance in the treasury,		\$802 00
Notes against the town,	\$2205 11	
Balance in treasury,	802 08	
Indebtedness of the town,		\$1403 03

CHARLES H. RAYMOND,
ALONZO TRAVIS,
GEORGE G. BATCHELDER,
Selectmen of Mont Vernon.

February 23d, 1881.

I have this day examined the above report and find the same
correctly cast and properly vouched.

JOHN TREVITT,
Auditor.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The treasurer of the town of Mont Vernon submits the following report for the year ending March 1st, 1881 :

To cash in the treasury, March 1st, 1880,	\$142 39	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1873,	41 00	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1878,	25 00	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1879,	800 00	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1880,	550 00	
Money received of collector, for 1880,	2548 41	
Money received from State, on railroads, banks, etc.,	617 59	
Received from Clark Campbell, license on bowling alley,	10 00	
		\$4734 39

CR.

By paying county tax,	\$709 47	
By paying State tax,	744 00	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1873,	41 00	
Note for uncollected taxes for 1880,	550 00	
By paying 82 orders of selectmen,	2478 84	
		\$4523 31
Whole amount of receipts,	\$4734 39	
Whole amount of bills paid,	4523 31	

Balance in the treasury, \$211 08
All of which is respectfully submitted.

CLARK CAMPBELL,
Town Treasurer.

February 23, 1881.

I have this day examined the above report and find the same correctly cast and properly vouched.

JOHN TREVITT,
Auditor.

SCHOOL REPORT.

To the Citizens of Mont Vernon :

In making my annual report to you, I must first of all beg leave to depart from the custom of my predecessors, and not take time or space to go into a minute notice, complimentary or otherwise, of all the schools and all the teachers who have taught during the year ; of these schools, tabulated statements will be found appended to this report. The teachers during the year, have, for the most part, been industrious, conscientious and successful in the discharge of their duties. The prudential committees have done what they could, and more than could fairly be expected of them, considering the general non-interest in the schools, on the part of parents and tax-payers. Your superintendent has visited the schools as required by law ; in several cases more than the required number of times ; and has endeavored to maintain on the part of the teachers, a higher grade of work, and on the part of pupils a higher standard of acquirement, than seems to be the condition of most of the New Hampshire common schools. Yet we have had poor schools—we have received poor return for our money invested ; and this without its being possible to lay anything very blameworthy to the teachers, prudential committees, or Superintendent. There are radical defects in our town schools, which lie deeper than the interests mentioned above.

The first and most potent is a want of system—system in course of study, and system in text-books. I have endeavored to bring about a uniformity of text-books, and in two districts have nearly or quite accomplished this. The only book I have introduced as new to all the schools is the Eclectic Geography

which is to supplant the old, poorly arranged, poorly printed and incorrect Cornell. I have exchanged the new geography grade for grade for the old, without any charge, and this offer will be open for ten days only, after the publishing of this report. Whenever scholars have been obliged to purchase new books on arithmetic, I have furnished them White's Arithmetic which is the most practical work for young scholars now published. It is hoped that this book (White's Primary and White's Complete) will be adopted through all the schools during the coming year. The book can be obtained at the lowest rate of Mrs. J. A. Wheeler of Milford. Two schools have also fitted up their grammar classes with Swinton's Language Primer,—a book which is unexcelled in simplicity and directness, and consequent usefulness in the lower classes. It has been urged that the five district schools should have the same books which are in use in the academy. At first thought this view seems a correct one; but when it is remembered that the district schools are essentially primary schools, and that the McCollom Institute must serve the town in place of a grammar and high school, it will at once be acknowledged that the grade of books should be lower in the common schools than in the academy. This has been the ground taken by your Superintendent in his action. The Eclectic Intermediate Geography is supplemented in the Institute by Guyot's,—a difficult and advanced book; the White's Complete Arithmetic by Eaton's High School; Swinton's Primer by Swinton's English Grammar.

But more deplorable than the lack of uniformity in text books is the lack of system in instruction given.

The grade of the common schools is not high, nor will it ever be so long as much better instruction can be given in the Institute at so little expense. The only way that appears to your Superintendent to offer a practicable solution of the difficulty is to do now what will eventually be done. That the town adopt the one district system, so called, as now in use in Amherst and Milford, : that they establish a regular system of primary work, and that arrangements be made with the trustees of McCollom Institute to use that school as a grammar and high school.

Under our present laws the five districts of this town might be united in one, giving to each the same length of school and better instruction. The average length of the school year is a fraction under twenty-three weeks, of which the centre district had thirty-three. Each district might have thirty-eight or forty at a slightly increased expense. More is lost from the middle of November, when some of our schools close, to the first of May than the best teacher can give or the brightest scholar acquire in eight or ten weeks. Wherever this method has been tried it has met with great success and given complete satisfaction. It would demand of the town the appointment of a committee who should classify and regulate the work. It would demand of the schools and teachers better work. A system of examinations, and promotions based on the examinations, would be necessary. It would shorten the number of years a pupil must remain in the primary or district schools, and while he did remain he would gain a more complete understanding of his work and be much better fitted to enter a school of higher grade. Another result, which would be for the advantage both of the town and Institute, would follow, viz:—That no pupil could enter the Institute who was unfitted for the grade of work taken up there.

I herewith submit a sketch of work which might very properly be done in the primary schools.

FIRST YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—By oral lessons. The material to be found in the reading lessons, in flowers, conversation and in conversational study of familiar things.

READING AND SPELLING.—In great part from blackboard.

WRITING.—The simplest letters.

ARITHMETIC.—Numbers up to 10.

DRAWING.—At least one hour a week. Measure the lengths of lines, and rule straight lines.

SINGING.—A few minutes each day.

PHYSICAL.—Gymnastics at least ten minutes during each session.

SECOND YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—The same as first year.

READING AND SPELLING.—Difficulty of last year's work slightly increased, but mainly of one syllable.

ARITHMETIC.—Numbers 1 to 10; their relations; multiplying and dividing. Learn the Arabic figures.

WRITING.—The small script letters.

DRAWING.—The simple curve This united with the straight lines.

GYMNASTICS.—As before.

THIRD YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—Continued conversation, introducing things less familiar to be compared with things more familiar.

READING AND SPELLING.—Longer words. Reading from book and from a paper.

WRITING.—Capitals and small letters.

ARITHMETIC.—Numbers from 1 to 20. How long is a foot?

DRAWING.—Other curves. Outlines of symmetrical figures.

MUSIC.—Easy songs by rote.

GYMNASTICS.—Every day.

FOURTH YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—Written sentences. Grouping of objects.

READING AND SPELLING.—From the Second Reader.

WRITING.—Written exercises, spelling, etc., both on slates and the board.

ARITHMETIC.—Numbers 1 to 100. Operations with answers in figures. Measures of distance.

DRAWING.—Copying of work from cards to board, or from the board to paper.

MUSIC.—Songs by rote.

GYMNASTICS.—As before.

FIFTH YEAR.

LANGUAGE AND ORAL INSTRUCTION.—Stories, anecdotes, and study of new objects and qualities.

READING AND SPELLING.—The Third Reader. Reading from papers and other books.

WRITING.—Dictation and written script.

ARITHMETIC.—Numbers 1 to 1000. The fundamental rules. Roman numerals. No multiplier larger than 10.

DRAWING.—Drawing books. Quality of lines.

MUSIC.—Same as before.

GYMNASTICS.—As before.

SIXTH YEAR.

LANGUAGE AND ORAL INSTRUCTION.—Color, mechanism, and use of various articles.

READING AND SPELLING.—Third Reader and some narratives.

WRITING.—Letter writing. The expression of thought on paper.

ARITHMETIC.—Combinations of hundreds and of thousands and the reading and writing integers. Properties of numbers.

DRAWING.—Same as last year.

GYMNASTICS AND MUSIC.

SEVENTH YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—Oral and written exercises. Plants, animals, articles of trade and commerce.

READING AND SPELLING.—Fourth Reader. Written exercises in all studies, to be corrected as to spelling.

ARITHMETIC.—Fractions, common and decimal. Units of weights and measures.

GEOGRAPHY.—Oral one term, with Primary Geography two terms.

DRAWING.—Books, lines, angles, etc. Design.

MUSIC AND GYMNASTICS.

EIGHTH YEAR.

LANGUAGE.—Swinton's Primer. Compositions. Poetry recited. Stories from history. Use of cyclopedia and dictionary.

READING AND SPELLING.—Fourth Reader. Spelling same as last year. Supplementary reading in history.

ARITHMETIC.—Percentage. Compound numbers. Ratio and proportion.

GEOGRAPHY.—Intermediate geography every day.

HISTORY.—History of the U. S. every day.

DRAWING.—Books, objects. Model drawing. Design. The geometry of drawing.

MUSIC AND GYMNASTICS.

At first sight this course of study will very probably seem impracticable. It will be said to give too much to the teacher and perhaps break and confuse and therefore utterly destroy her work.

A little careful investigation will prove that this method sketched above will in reality give more time to the teacher, and better opportunity to benefit her pupils than she has at present. In many exercises the whole school will be united; in those of music, language and much of the earlier arithmetic. The teacher would not have as many classes to hear every day as under the present system. The advantage to the pupils would be apparent from the very start. Your Superintendent does not claim that this is a perfect plan of work, or even that it is the best. It is a copy of none that he knows of, although modeled after many now in use in many schools, particularly in Massachusetts. Your Superintendent has, in accordance with the laws of the State, examined during the school year, seven candidates for position as teacher in our public schools. This thing has been painfully apparent; that without exception, there is dangerous ignorance on the part of teachers of two subjects, numbers and language. I say a dangerous ignorance—dangerous to the pupil—because the only two things of which a boy or girl under ten years of age gains very much knowledge, are the

use and meaning of numbers, and the art of speaking and writing the English language. For this reason, if no other, our teachers should have a perfect understanding of numbers, their properties and powers, and a systematic knowledge of language. It is of infinitely more importance that our pupils under ten or twelve years of age know how to express their thoughts in good sentences, than that they know how many miles there are in a degree of latitude, or what the shortest route may be from New York to Hong Kong. And yet my impression of the schools in this town is that the teaching has been over the heads of the pupils—that they have learned a few isolated facts, which they may or may not remember, while the minds are very little broader or stronger. I make an exception here to the Center District, where language has been made the most prominent study, and geography has been taught in part by means of a moulding-board, or in plainer terms, a heap of sand, from which the smallest pupils who study geography—and it is usually studied at a much too early age—have been allowed to form the outline and general shape of the continents.

With the teachers themselves, I have no fault to find, but I deem it eminently proper that a word should be said on this score. We shall never have the teachers we ought to have and must have if our schools are successful, till two things are done. First, that a reasonable compensation be paid those who do the work. If we reckon the teacher's wages according to the wages of the young women of the same age in the cotton or woollen mill, we may be very sure we shall get teachers who are best fitted to work in the cotton mill or some other place at a like distance from the school room.

Secondly, that only those should be hired as teachers who are willing to make a profession of the work, and who have had sufficient professional training to give them a good start in the possibly new experience of the school-room. Till the ancient idea that "*anyone* can keep our common schools" be thoroughly eradicated from the minds of parents and prudential committees, we shall never have good schools. The common schools are the bulwark and safety of our government and social institutions; therefore much, very much, depends on the instruction

given in those schools. You would not dare put your sick child into the hands of a druggist's shop boy for healing—why then should you be willing for an instant to entrust the mind of that child, a much more delicate mechanism than the body, to the totally untrained handling of your *neighbor's girl*? But the parents' duty does not end with instructing the committee man to secure a teacher amply qualified for the work. To secure the best results there must be hearty and intelligent co-operation on the part of those who send children. Let the parent never in the child's hearing, criticize or find fault with the teacher's methods or results; let the child never be by word or look defended in wrong doing of any kind.

As has been suggested already, there should be some method of testing the pupil's knowledge of work. This can only be done by examinations—of course I do not refer to the farces now called by that name—the half-day shows which are a trial to teacher and scholars at the end of every term, but to real examinations upon the result of which shall depend the pupil's promotion from class to class, or from the primary schools to the Institute. I would not underrate the importance of the declamations and compositions, and even the class recitations, which are brought forward at such a time. They are of value and should form a part of every term's work. But these public exercises should not be called examinations, nor should they be reckoned as indicative in any respect of the knowledge which the classes have of the studies pursued during the term.

There is a great tendency to laxness in the direction of promptness and regularity of attendance. It is needless to say, perhaps, that a school cannot be a success without constant attendance, yet many children and parents seem to have forgotten it. Thinking that it may help the matter somewhat, I give below the "Roll of Honor," that is the names of those pupils who have been present during a whole term without absence or tardiness:

FROM THE SOUTH DISTRICT.—Fannie L. Dodge, Jessie A. Trow, Charles A. Trow, Dana C. Raymond, Stillman E. Curtis, Frank N. Hooper, Roy W. Hutchinson, Luvis A. Trow.

NORTH DISTRICT.—Mary E. Reilly (whole year), Hattie M. Kittredge, Sadie A. Harvell.

WEST DISTRICT.—Lizzie A. Stearns, George E. Averill.

EAST DISTRICT.—Eva Brown, Clara Brown, Mary Fairfield (whole year), Walter Fairfield, Willie McQuestion, Eugene Damon, Maurice Herleny, James Herleny, Harvey C. May, Bertha McQuestion, Tola Sargent.

CENTER DISTRICT.—John A. Bruce, Willie A. Stinson, Geo. W. Pike, Alice Campbell, Grace Campbell, Annie E. Smith, Grace Smith.

The suggestions made above are given in no spirit of fault-finding. My excuse for not taking the schools and teachers one by one is that I consider it a thankless task, and a useless, and often harmful custom. Your Superintendent in taking leave of the office, only asks that these suggestions be given a fair trial, and if found reasonable and satisfactory, adopted.

It is very fitting that a word should be said in regard to the library of the town, for which an appropriation was made last year. The young people of the Mont Vernon Literary Society gave to the town fifty-one volumes. The old stockholder library of one hundred and thirty-seven volumes, was united with this, and the town itself appropriated fifty dollars for the purchase of books. Mr. Clark Campbell and your Superintendent were appointed a committee to purchase and put in the library the books. Forty-one volumes were put in, comprising works of history, travel, biography and fiction. These volumes have been very generally used. The library is open five times a week at the expense of the principal of the school, and the town's people have access to the valuable library of McCollum Institute. Your committee would most heartily urge another appropriation, and that this be continued each year, till Mont Vernon have a library such as every town ought to have. The advantage accruing from it can hardly be overrated to the young and old, and it is hoped that the good work thus begun will be carried on to final success.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

DISTRICT		Summer, Fall and Winter.	NAMES OF TEACHERS.	Length of term in weeks.				Number of Pupils.		Average attendance.	Wages of teachers, incld. board.	Visits by Superintendent.	Visits by Prudential Committee.	Visits by citizens.	Pupils under five years of age	Pupils over sixteen yrs. of age.	Pupils who have not been absent.
								Boys.	Girls.								
CENTER ...	S		Miss N. M. Hardy.....	8	23	13	10	22	30.00	2	2	19	..	..	..	..	..
	F		Miss N. M. Hardy.....	12	21	11	10	18	30.00	4	3	49	..	..	..	..	..
	W		Miss Proctor.....	12	24	13	11	23	30.00	3	3	19	..	..	..	8	..
SOUTH.....	S		Miss Julia A. Dodge.....	10	16	9	7	14½	26.00	1	..	24	1	..	4	..	4
	F		Miss Julia A. Dodge.....	14	23	15	8	19½	26.00	2	1	17	1	..	4	..	4
EAST.	S		Miss A. E. Caldwell.....	8	22	12	10	21	20.00	2	..	11	1	..	8	..	8
	F		Miss A. E. Caldwell.....	11	22	13	9	19	22.00	3	1	7	..	..	8	..	8
WEST.....	S		Miss Vianna A. Green.....	9	10	8	2	7	16.00	2	..	13	..	..	1	..	1
	F		Mrs. Eda M. Carson.....	12	7	5	2	6	16.00	2	1	15	1	1	1	..	1
NORTH.....			Miss Catherine F. Averill....	10	13	6	7	12	20.00	2	..	5	1	..	1	..	1
			Miss Catherine F. Averill....	7	14	6	8	13	20.00	2	..	9	..	..	4	..	4

Amount of money raised by town Literary Fund.

Amount allotted Center District, \$311 56

Amount allotted South District, 177 44

Amount allotted East District, 100 59

Amount allotted North District, 91 13

Amount allotted West District, 79 18

Amount allotted 8th Amherst District, 15 18

The above report is respectfully submitted.

W. H. RAY,

Town Superintendent of Schools.

Mont Vernon, N. H., Feb. 25, 1881.

